



THE LEADER

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Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D. ♦ www.grandforks.af.mil

March 21, 2003

Crucial contributors

Base celebrates accomplishments
during Women's History Month,
-- See Pages 10 and 11



319th Air Refueling Wing ♦ Winners of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (July 2000 to June 2002)

Inside:

Weekend weather

Today 38/25 partly cloudy
Saturday 47/32 partly cloudy
Sunday 53/34 rain
Monday 44/35 mostly cloudy



Weather information courtesy
319th Operations Support Squadron weather flight

War has begun

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New chem suits introduced

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Base holds Iditarod

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Tanker town: Deployed aircrews merge into largest CAF-North unit

More than just business, mission and purpose provide the motivating fuel for the 401st AEW

By Capt. Shane Balken
401st Air Expeditionary Wing public affairs

Ask any business owner about the most important rule of economics and they will tell you when demand exceeds supply, business is good. Ask the same question to a tanker crew when their demand far outweighs their supply and they will tell you business is booming. Literally.

KC-135 crews from RAF Mildenhall, England; Grand Forks Air Force Base and the Wisconsin Air National Guard joined forces in the recent weeks, making a 'corporate merger' into the 401st Air Expeditionary Wing in the Mediterranean region and have been open for business refueling Air Force, Navy and allied aircraft.

Although the location of the base cannot be disclosed due to host nation sensitivities, the KC-135 Stratotanker operation is the largest in the Coalition Air Forces-North region as they stand ready for any mission Operation Enduring Freedom brings their way.

Lt. Col. Sean Carey, 911th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron

commander, said the deployment of Grand Forks tankers here went great and the attitude of his aircrew members and support personnel remains very upbeat.

"This is the fourth operating location the wing (319th Air Refueling Wing) has been deployed to in one year," said Carey. "We're used to deploying from snow to sand in minimal time and making a direct impact on national security. Everyone understands the importance of what we're doing, which is reflected in their positive, can-do attitude."

Operating out of a deployed environment is always more difficult than from home station and depending if the deployed location has existing communication infrastructure or a bare base can make all the difference. Capt. Jonathan Keen, a planning officer from RAF Mildenhall, said the deployment has been a learning experience for everyone involved.

"The hardest thing about the deployment so far has been the information flow," said Keen. "The Air Force has come a long way in the last 15 years but it's still amazing how much we rely on technology. Our buildings and working conditions have steadily improved since we've been here but it makes you appreciate how people operated before us."

With the recent influx of aircraft and aircrew members coming in, flight scheduling for both bases has been busy with the number of increasing missions. Capt. Rob Pochert is a scheduling officer

for the deployment and has been involved with the integration of the units from the very beginning.

A nine-year veteran, Pochert like many of the aircrew members has several previous deployments in his business portfolio and said he's been impressed with the experienced personnel from each location. "The Grand Forks aircrews have a lot of experience from deployments to PSAB (Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia) and ONW (Operation Northern Watch) where the aircrews from RAF Mildenhall have the European experience. We need both sides of those experiences for this deployment as we deal with issues such as diplomatic clearances, air tasking orders and host nation sensitivities," said Pochert. "There wasn't many pre-existing Air Force assets or infrastructure to support this large of an operation initially but the cohesion of our units and the support from the host nation has helped us come a long way in a short time."

Senior Airman Chris Rueckert is a boom operator from Grand Forks AFB and just recently arrived here last week. Rueckert was on alert to fly as he talked about his personal thoughts about operating out of a new location.

"This is my sixth deployment and although there have been challenges merging two units together, the opportunity to work with new people has been nice. I've done other rotational deploy-

ments before, but knowing the impact of this deployment and that something bigger is coming makes this one particularly special," said Rueckert.

The 401st AEW has three kinds of refueling capabilities with the new multi-point refueling system, the boom drogue assembly, and the hard boom, allowing for aerial refueling of any type of aircraft in the U.S. or allied inventory.

As Lt. Col. Chevy Cleaves, 351st EARS commander, put it, "We put the 'global' in mobility, reach, strike, attack, and presence." Cleaves and Carey are splitting the CEO duties of the tanker fleet, each commanding a squadron.

"The operation is going very well," said Cleaves. "The role of the tanker is pivotal to any operation and certainly this one. It's also unique in the sense that we are the only Air Force in the world with extensive inflight refueling capability. MPRS plays a key part in that because it allows us to conduct either boom or drogue refueling on the same mission...increasing efficiency, flexibility and effectiveness for America and her Allies."

"Everyone here is focused on serving their country. I'm extremely proud of their dedication and preparation. I know that, as always, they'll be there whenever and wherever they are needed."

In a time of economic slumps and employment worries, job opportunities for the KC-135 remain strong. Especially when demand far outweighs supply.



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The Action Line is your avenue for information about events and activities on and around the base.

For questions about current events or rumors, please leave a message.

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Col. Keye Sabol
319th Air Refueling Wing commander

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War begins: Coalition aircraft attack Iraqi targets at dawn

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Operations to disarm Iraq have begun, President Bush announced during a speech to America Wednesday night.

The president confirmed the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world.

News reports from Baghdad showed anti-aircraft artillery streaming into the sky. Western reporters spoke of hearing bombs drop in the western part of the city – which is home to many government buildings.

"On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war," the president said from the Oval Office at 10:15 p.m. Eastern time. Bush stressed this will be a broad and concerted campaign.

He said the coalition – 35 nations contributing in a variety of ways – is moving to disarm Hussein and put a stop to his murderous rule. "Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of sharing in our common defense," Bush said.

Bush had direct words to the more than 250,000 U.S. service members in the area of operations. "The peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you," the president said. "That trust is well-placed. The enemies you confront will soon

know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military."

He said that once again Saddam Hussein has placed innocent civilians amid military targets. He assured the world that coalition forces will do all they can to minimize Iraqi casualties.

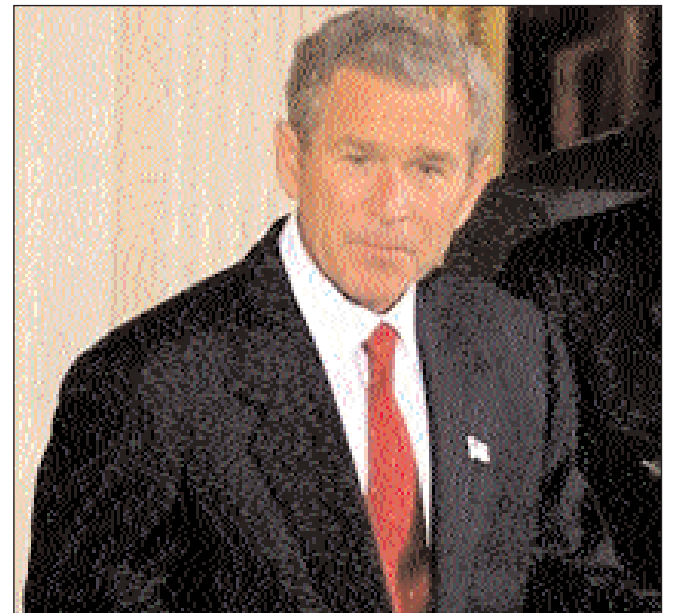
Bush observed the conflict will be dangerous, but U.S. commitment will not end with victory. He promised America will help feed the population of Iraq and rebuild the infrastructure of the oil-rich land.

But even then, the United States will not stay in the nation one second longer than necessary. "We have no ambition in Iraq except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people," Bush said.

The president also spoke of the sacrifice made by the relatives of American service members. "I know that the families of our military are now praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon," he said.

"Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people. And you can know our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done."

Bush pointed out that now is the time to confront the threat Saddam Hussein has become. Waiting will only make things worse, he said. "We will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now



President Bush announced during a speech to America Wednesday night that Operations to disarm Iraq have begun.

with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so we will not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters, and police and doctors on the streets of our cities."

He stressed the U.S. military will apply decisive force to ensure a speedy campaign. "I assure you this will not be a campaign of half-measures and we will accept no outcome but victory," he said.

Warriors receive new chem suits



Photo by 1st Lt. Rob Lazaro

Staff Sgt. Tethon Hunting dons the newest chemical protective overgarment, the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology.

Newest two-piece over garment is lighter, cooler, more effective

By 1st Lt. Rob Lazaro
Public affairs

The Air Force's newest chemical protective overgarment, the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology ensemble, better known as the JS-LIST, was introduced to the base populous during mass briefings on counter chemical warfare operations at the base theater March 12.

The two-piece overgarment uses carbon sphere technology that allows the charcoal protection to be formed into tiny beads and woven into the suit fabric. This technology gives the JS-LIST a 60-day service life and the ability to be laundered six times. They are less heat intensive to wear compared to the previous battle dress overgarment.

"These new suits are lighter, better fitting and more effective against today's chemical and biological threats," said Herold James, 319th Civil Engineer

Squadron readiness program specialist. "They are also easier and take less time to put on than the old chemical suits."

The JS-LIST tops and bottoms are packaged separately, so that members can mix and match sizes to get the best fit. The jacket comes ready with a hood attachment, which eliminates the need for the additional gas mask hood, and added suspenders on the trousers combine with Velcro straps to secure the suit in place.

"These new suits are effective counters to enemy threats," said James. "From chemical agents VX and mustard to biological agents anthrax and smallpox."

The 319th Supply Squadron has been issuing the new chemical protective overgarments to deploying members since early February.

"It's definitely an improvement," said Staff Sgt. Tethon Hunting, 319th CES readiness flight. "It's lighter and cooler than the old ones."

Total force flexes its muscle overseas

By Tech. Sgt. Mona Ferrell
U.S. Air Forces in Europe News Service

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (AFPN) — The total force muscle is showing its strength throughout U.S. Air Forces in Europe as Air Force reservists and Air National Guardsmen answer the call of duty alongside their active-duty counterparts.

Although the number varies daily, the Air National Guard has about 1,800 airmen and more than 60 aircraft supporting USAFE. Reservists have close to another 30 planes and nearly 1,000 airmen helping to move troops, equipment and cargo as the buildup continues, said Col. Roger Clements, Air National Guard adviser to the USAFE commander.

The numbers have been increasing due to world events, and "they're changing every day," Clements said.

Because of USAFE's strategic location, the command's bases serve as forward locations and as replenishment points for resources moving toward Southwest Asia, Clements said. "This requires significant airlift and refueling capabilities -- two of the air reserve components' primary assets."

Nearly 75 percent of the Air Force's C-130 Hercules fleet and more than 50 percent of its air refueling assets belong to the Guard and Reserve, Clements said.

"This alone helps to illustrate the point (that) when we start to forward-deploy troops, we have to immediately begin to tap our Guard and Reserve folks," he said.

And this force buildup is tapping the full range of specialties within the reserve forces, said Col. Denny Jobes, reserve program manager for USAFE headquarters.

"We are looking over the full spectrum of Air Force specialties, and from all of our units," she said. "These groups aren't coming from any specific state or base. Everyone's actively engaged."

"It's built on requirements," Jobes said. "There are some exceptions, but by and large, our units are pulled to fill requirements that the active duty force identifies. It may be a whole unit, a piece of one, or it can even be one person."

The requirements are the driving force for the ANG and reserve contingent in USAFE.

Guard and reserve forces work on the air bridge, as airlifters, using the C-5 Galaxy, C-141 Starlifter, and C-130 fleet to carry cargo and people, Clements said, and as air refuelers, providing trans-oceanic and Mediterranean

refueling using KC-135 Stratotankers and KC-10 Extenders.

"Our bases in Europe provide a mid-point to many of our forward-operating locations," Clements said. "So our air refuelers handle the refueling to get here and again provide support between the mid-way point and the final destination. Also, fighter aircraft ... and rescue HC-130s and HH-60s are in place, ready if needed."

It is this type of total force teamwork and support that ensures the mission at hand is accomplished.

"Combatant commanders have frequently said, 'We couldn't do the mission without the Guard and reserve,'" Clements said. "The troops in the field are just as aware of that. We have inter-operability, (we) train to the same standards and get evaluated by the same standards, we work as a team -- we are one team."

And the teamwork will continue, Jobes said.

"With the kind of operations tempo and buildup we're maintaining, we have to use all of our assets. When you walk into a room, you can't tell who is active duty, Guard or reserve -- it's total force. Everybody knows the mission, and everyone's dedicated to getting it done."

(Courtesy of USAFE News Service)

Base promotes 13 to senior master sergeant

Out of 1,612 master sergeants picked for promotion Wednesday, 13 came from the 319th Air Refueling Wing. The base selectees are:

- Gregory M. Bozeman, 319th Medical Group
- Dale V. Briest, 319th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Marie T. Brunswick, 319th Mission Support Squadron
- Robert W. Burandt, 319th Communications Squadron
- Scott C. Copeland, 319th Operations Support Squadron
- Scott A. Fuller, 319th Maintenance Operations Squadron
- Lisa M. Henry, 319th Operations Support Squadron
- Teresa J. Holmes, 906th Air Refueling Squadron
- David J. Johnson, 319th Aeromedical Dental Squadron
- Michael A. Mader, 319th Air Refueling Wing
- Mark E. Mezydlo, 319th Maintenance Squadron
- Kenneth D. Schuler, 319th Maintenance Group
- Thomas E. Tezel, 319th Medical Group

For the first time, the the E-8 and E-9 promotion cycles were selected using the chronic critical skills program, which applies higher selection rates to certain career fields.

Under the program, officials identified 25 career fields to be classified as critical skills for the E-8 promotion cycle. The overall selection rate for this cycle, 10.18 percent, is the highest since 1987. The move pushed average selection percentages, depending on the multiplier applied, up to 30.88 percent.

“We’re now including E-8s and E-9s because of critical senior noncommissioned officer shortages in these (Air Force specialties) that are seriously impacting mission

Selection rates

Air Force

Eligible - 15,831
Selects - 1,612
Rate - 10.18 percent

Air Mobility Command

Eligible - 3,321
Selects - 233
Rate - 10.04 percent

Grand Forks

Eligible 99
Selects - 13
Rate - 13.13 percent

readiness,” said Chief Master Sgt. Carol Dockery, chief of enlisted promotions and evaluation at the Pentagon.

The effort to expand the chronic critical skills program to the two highest enlisted ranks began during the central evaluation board and final approval came only days ago, said officials.

To get there, those competing for promotion in designated Air Force specialty codes are assigned a higher selection rate, 1.2 times the Air Force average, Dockery said.

For example, an AFSC with a 15 percent selection rate would receive an 18 percent promotion rate when placed on the critical skills list.

“Now, more than ever, it’s absolutely essential that we balance our enlisted force structure to meet our expeditionary force requirements,” said Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray. “We must continue to use the (chronic critical skills) program and all other available tools, such as selective re-enlistment bonuses, incentive pays and retraining, if we are to achieve balance in our force.”

Senior NCOs in Air Force specialties manned at or below 70 percent with less than 25 people eligible for promotion received a multiplier of 3.0; those manned at or below 70 percent with more than 25 people eligible for promotion received a multiplier of 1.4; and those manned above 70 percent but less than 90 percent received a multiplier of 1.2.

Future chronic critical skills will be announced before the central evaluation board for each promotion cycle.

The senior master sergeant evaluation board met Jan. 22 to Feb. 7.

Those selected for promotion to senior master sergeant automatically receive a school quota for the Senior NCO Academy. And 357 of those not selected are scheduled to attend with a list of 720 alternates, officials said.

Senior master sergeant promotions begin in April. The complete list of promotees and Senior NCO Academy selections will be posted on the Air Force Personnel Center Web site by Saturday at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/eprom>.

Base theater

Today, 7 p.m.

Shanghai Knights (PG-13)

This sequel to the successful Shanghai Noon reunites 19th-century imperial guard Chon Wang (Jackie Chan) and train robber Roy O'Bannon (Owen Wilson). The duo finds London calling when Wang's sister, Lin (Fann Wong), heads to England looking for the Chinese rebels who murdered their father. Chon and Roy follow and find themselves trying to foil a plot to murder the royal family. In addition to avenging his father's death, Chon must keep an eye on Roy, who wants to put the moves on Lin.

Today, 9:15 p.m.

About Schmidt (R)

From the makers of the critically praised Election comes About Schmidt, which tells the story of Warren Schmidt (Jack Nicholson), a 67-year-old Omaha, Neb., insurance actuary. Upon his retirement, he reassesses his life, wondering whether his job, marriage, and family life were ever what he had hoped. Warren's daughter (Hope Davis) barely speaks to him, lives in Denver, and is set to marry a man (Dermot Mulroney) he disapproves of. When tragedy strikes, Warren takes a cross-country trip to stop the marriage and find meaning in his own life.

Saturday, 7 p.m.

The Recruit (PG-13)

Colin Farrell stars as a young CIA operative in training with another young agent, played by Bridget Moynahan. Their mentor (Al Pacino) advises them that nothing is as it seems, and he's right: When Farrell's agent is told that Moynahan's character is a mole, he has to decide whether she's double-crossing him or whether it's his boss who is playing mind games.

March 28, 7 p.m.

How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days (PG-13)

March 29, 7 p.m.

Dark Blue (R)

Tickets: \$1.50 children, \$3 adults
For details, call 747-3021/6123.

Base chapel

CATHOLIC:

Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m. Sunday.

Daily Mass: Tuesday - Friday 11:30 a.m.

Sunflower Chapel

Stations of the Cross: 7 p.m. Wednesday,

Sunflower Chapel

CCD: 10:45 a.m. Sunday, Twining Elementary School, RCIA plus Confirmation

Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Sunday, or by appointment, Sunflower Chapel

PROTESTANT:

Traditional worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Sunflower Chapel.

Liturgical worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Prairie Rose Chapel.

Contemporary worship: 6 p.m. Sunday, Prairie Rose Chapel

Young Adults: 6 p.m. Friday, Chaplain Swain's home 747-4359

Youth: 4 p.m. Sunday, meet at youth center

Religious Education: 9 a.m. Sunday, Eielson Elementary School.

Men of the Chapel: noon Monday, Prairie Rose conference room

JEWISH:

For details call Sheila Farquharson at 594-3960 or Synagogue B'nai Israel at 775-5124.

RUSSIAN/EASTERN ORTHODOX:

For details call Dr. Levitov 780-6540.

MUSLIM, BUDDHIST, OTHER:

For details call 747-5673.

Briefs

‘Pioneering Women: Innovative Women of Today’

A Women’s History Month luncheon is 11:30 a.m., March 27, at the club. The luncheon costs \$7.05, for club members and \$8.05 for non-club members.

Merle Freije, an educator on base, speaks on “Pioneering Women: Innovative Women of Today.”

Open seating is available for those not wanting lunch. For details call Tech. Sgt. Luis Brito at 747-3199.

Courts-Martial

On Feb. 25, Staff Sgt. Nicholas R. Intrery, 319th Maintenance Squadron, was convicted at general court-martial of two specifications of indecent acts with a female under the age of 16 in violation of Article 134 of the UCMJ, and two specifications of assault consummated by a battery upon a child under 16 years of age in violation of Article 128, UCMJ. He was sentenced to a Dishonorable Discharge, nine years confinement, reduction to E-1, and forfeiture of all pay and allowances.

On March 12, Senior Airman Ryne E. Dashner, 319th Maintenance Squadron, was convicted at general court-martial of one specification of wrongful use of cocaine in violation of Article 112a of the UCMJ. He was sentenced to a Bad Conduct Discharge, 100 days confinement, and reduction to E-1.

Brochure helps war worries

A brochure prepared by the University of North Dakota’s Department of Social Work and distributed through the United Way can help children in grades K-12 and their parents cope with worries that children have about war.

Threats or realities of war are frightening to everyone, and especially to children who may worry about terrorists or military action overseas and that it could result in personal loss and more violence here at home, providers of the brochure said.

Thomasine Heitkamp of UND said the brochure was developed after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and has been revised.

The brochure, “Worries About War: Helping Children Cope,” is being distributed through various agencies, including the Grand Forks Public Schools. For a copy, contact United Way, 406 DeMers Avenue or call 775-8661.

OPSEC tip

Many people generate personal web-pages to share information and photos with their friends and families. However, you should also be aware that in essence, posting your personal information to the Internet is the same as directly faxing that information to every con-man, terrorist organization, sexual predator and foreign intelligence agency in the world! If any of these nefarious entities wish to exploit you or your family for their personal interest, you have just allowed them a foot in your door. And the more information you provide them, the wider and easier that door may swing.

OPSEC Measure: Practice good OPSEC in off duty/personal time.

Bottom-Line: Increase your personal protection by reducing your personal web exposure. The more personal information that you post the higher your risk.

Looking for sharp NCO’s

Attention sharp NCO’s interested in retraining, see the 319th Manpower Office. Selected individuals would be part of a handpicked team. Their members are experienced in working with the highest levels of management and learn about every function in the Air Force through day-to-day association. Nearly every major CONUS and overseas Air Force base has a manpower and organization office, requiring enlisted personnel.

Manpower and organization work at these bases encompasses most “state of the art” computer and management techniques. The methods, techniques, and philosophies employed are accepted practices in leading industrial and business firms worldwide. Manpower and organization technical school is eight-weeks long and then let you gain practical experience at your first manpower assignment. For details call 2nd Lt. Cameron Jackson at 747- 3248.

Officers/SNCOs needed

Base officers and senior NCOs are needed to sponsor visiting cadets from the 319th Air Refueling Wing’s USAFA Cadet Sponsor Squadron, CS-08, from April 10-14.

Sponsors would be asked to provide lodging and transportation to/from daily activities. All meals will be available and provided for by the Airey Dining Facility. For details call Capt. Matt Albright at 747-3361.

AMC commander thanks warriors for extraordinary efforts in war against terrorism

By Gen. John W. Handy
U.S. Transportation Command and Air
Mobility Command commander

To the Men and Women of Air Mobility Command:

The sun never sets on the mission of the Air Mobility Command, nor does it set on the work of America's air mobility warriors who provide the skill, dedication and plain hard work that it takes to move and sustain military forces half way around the world.

Our nation is again poised for war against a cruel and threatening regime in Iraq, but we in AMC have been in the thick of battle for months, working incredibly long hours and maintaining an unprecedented pace.

"Outstanding" is inadequate to describe your efforts in the Global War on Terrorism. Every day I meet and talk with mobility heroes — ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Every day I am more amazed at what our team is accomplishing.

Since the initial terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, you have delivered almost a half-million members of the armed forces and a half-million tons of equipment and sustainment into Southwest Asia.

You have flown 4,000 aerial refueling missions for American and coalition aircraft, giving our air forces greater range

in our global mission and making good on our promise to deliver vital resources to the warfighters.

Our combatant commanders rely on you to help them honor the pledge of a free people to battle global terror; prevent further harm to Americans, defeat the threat and defend the peace.

You have met every challenge with unwavering professionalism and dedication. When we've had to redirect our operations because of adverse weather or international indecision, you've proven the flexibility of airpower and succeeded beyond all expectations.

We are one team, with one fight — active, Guard, Reserve, civilian, contractor or corporate partner; all have courageously accepted our wartime mission both at home and around the world. And we are able to continue that mission because of the steadfast support of our families. They are heroes as well.

Because of you, America's military is positioned and supported to do whatever is required to protect our country, our freedom and our way of life. Our nation's citizens have placed their confidence in us. We have not and will not let them down. America is proud of you and I humbly share that pride.

My deepest thanks to all of you for what you do for America each and every day.

During his visit to the base last November, Gen. John Handy, got a chance to personally thank many 319th Air Refueling Wing warriors. (File photo)



Women’s rights movement marks 155th year

By Chief Master Sgt. Cassandra Haines-Jessel
341st Space Wing

MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Mont. (AFPN) — This year marks the 155th anniversary of the women’s rights movement in the United States.

It began in 1848 in a small town in New York when five women got together for tea. The conversation soon turned to the limitations on their lives and before they knew it, they were planning a convention to discuss the “rights of women.”

Since that time, other important events have shaped the lives of women in our country:

The Woman Suffrage Amendment was introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1878. The wording remained unchanged and didn’t pass both houses until 1919.

The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was rati-

fied in 1920, and women were granted the right to vote.

In 1948, President Truman signed into law the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act, giving women permanent status in the armed forces. No longer would special women’s “components” be formed for the duration of military emergencies. However, at the same time, it restricted promotions and established a 2 percent ceiling on the number of women in each of the services.

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Public Law 90-130 in 1967 that repealed restrictions on women’s promotions.

In 1980, President Carter issued a message to the public encouraging them to recognize and celebrate women’s historic accomplishments during the week of March 8, Women’s History Week.

A bipartisan effort in Congress in 1987 led to a National Women’s History Month Resolution and, since 1992, a

presidential proclamation directing observance of this important national celebration. For more than 140 years, women have served in all major U.S. military conflicts.

“American military women did just about everything on land, at sea and in the air (during the Persian Gulf War) except engage in the actual fighting,” said retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Jeanne M. Holm, “and even there the line was often blurred. It was obvious from the beginning that the front lines were not what they used to be and non-combat units regularly took casualties.”.

During that conflict, five women were killed in action and two were prisoners of war.

Today, in the Air Force, women represent 19.5 percent of the people in the service. And throughout the Air Force, Women’s History Month committees are making efforts during the month of March to remind the community of this year’s theme: “Women Pioneering the Future.”



Airman 1st Class Michelle Cosgrove, 319th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, loads her toolbox into the truck before heading out to the flightline.

Turning wrenches

Female aircraft mechanic loves the work

By Kris Jensen

There's something about Michelle Cosgrove that drives her to try to be the first one out the door with her toolbox.

The airman first class doesn't need to prove herself to her male colleagues - after all, she was named Airman of the Quarter for the 319th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron late last year, beating out fellow aircraft maintainers.

It could be that Cosgrove just loves her job.

She works on avionics - the autopilot system, flight instruments - and her job title is guidance and control specialist.

A typical day, she said, begins with "a few launches, maybe some red balls if a crew has a problem with one of our systems," she said, referring to what the civilian world calls red flags. The pace of her days depends on "how many jets we have flying and coming back."

At 29, she's older than most at her rank, and she thinks being a little older helped her acclimate as a woman in a predominantly male field. "It's helped make me feel more comfortable," she said. "But they guys are still the first ones to open the door for me or to try to carry my toolbox," she said. "I really try to be the first one out the door with my toolbox, though." The men in her squadron treat her "like one of the guys," she said.

She and her husband, Michael, have been together for eight years, married for two. Their wedding was just a few weeks before she left for basic training.

Choice to join

Her joining the Air Force was a choice the couple came to together.

"We sat down and decided I'd do it," she said. "I wanted something long term to carry me a long way."

Since her interest was in electronics, she narrowed her options to radar and communications/navigation systems. Her job, she says, has its physical demands, but its drain is more mental.

"These are complex systems, and they're so integrated. You have to know your books," Cosgrove said.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Sturkol

Airman 1st Class Michelle Cosgrove loves the work she does.

The stress magnifies during deployments, especially in today's tenuous political environment. She's just back from a two-month deployment to Base Y in southwest Asia, and though she hates being apart from her husband, she's ready to go again.

"When they tell me I gotta go," she says, "I'll go and be happy."

When she thinks of the women in World War II who paved the way for her, she's grateful, she said.

"We can do just about anything a man

can do," she said. "We can all shoot a gun. We can all turn wrenches. We can all contribute."

She encourages other young women who'd like to try their hand at aircraft mechanics, telling them "'not to be afraid to try anything. There are many opportunities out there, and lots of other girls are out there turning wrenches."

"I'm proud of what I do," Cosgrove said. "It's not easy work."

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Photos by 1st Lt. Rob Lazaro

Women's History Month activities

(Above) Base members get together for a poetry reading at Fast Eddie's in the community activities center March 12. The poetry reading emphasized female contributions and encouraged people to bring their own work.

(Left) 1st Lt. Natalie Kalivoda recites one of her own poems at the Women's History Month poetry reading.

Luncheon

Enjoy an educational luncheon during the finale of Women's History Month 11:30 a.m., Thursday at the club.

The 2003 theme, "Women Pioneering the Future," incorporates both pioneering women from U.S. history.

The cost is \$7.05 for club members and \$8.05 for non-club members. Open sitting is available for those who do not want lunch at no cost.

For details call Tech. Sgt. Luis Brito at 747-3199.

Community

Today

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

Today – Kid’s Class! Sew a Traveling Chalkboard from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$6 plus \$7.50 for supply kit.

Saturday – Framing Class from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cost is \$20 plus materials. Please bring a picture to frame.

Pre-registration and pre-payment are required for all classes. Contact the Skills Development Center to sign up, 747-3482.

FRIDAYS AT LIBERTY SQUARE

Open skating at Liberty Square tonight for ages 6-18 from 6 to 10 p.m. The cost is \$3 for admission and \$2 for skate rental.

The teen center at Liberty Square is open tonight for ages 13-18 from 6 to 11 p.m.

Saturday

BASE TALENT SHOW

The 2003 Base-wide Talent Show is 7 p.m., Saturday, at the community activities center. The show is open to the public and it is also free! For details call the community activities center at 747-6104.

Wednesday

NORTHERN LIGHTS CLUB

Spouses of our Deployed can enjoy a 20 percent discount off their meal tonight from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Northern Lights Club.

Thursday

VIDEO SERIES

Family child care offers a video series for “new parents” support group, child-care programs or the general public on base. It’s free, no registration needed.

Information includes: I Am Your Child Parenting Video Series; Topics are Positive Discipline, Safe from the Start, Ready to Learn, and The First Years Last Forever. Tonight’s class is Safe from the Start. Time: Thursdays from 10 a.m. to noon. Place: Family Child Care Office Bldg 320. For more information contact Kelly Painter from Family Child Care Office 747-4506. The Family Child Care Office and The New Parent Support Program sponsor this series.

Upcoming

MONGLIAN BARBECUE

The Northern Lights Club will have a

Mongolian BBQ March 28 from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

YOUTH OF THE YEAR

The State “Youth of the Year” Competition is on Mar. 29 in New Town, ND. Contact the Youth Center for more details on this event, 747-3150.

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Boys & Girls Clubs of America is having a Photography Contest for club members (you have to have been a club member for at least three months prior to contest date). Please pick up the rules and regulations at the youth center. The local exhibit is April 7 to 11. All photos must be turned into the youth center by April 3.

MALL OF AMERICA

Sign up by April 3 for outdoor recreation’s Mall of America trip April 5. Departure is at 5 a.m. from the community center and you will return late the same evening. Cost is \$25 per adult, children under 12 accompanied by an adult \$ 12.50, includes transportation only. For details call outdoor recreation, 747-3688.

SUPER SUNDAY BRUNCH

The Club is having their next Super Sunday Brunch on Apr. 6 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.! Come and enjoy 2 meats, biscuits & gravy, eggs, fruit, waffles, omelets and more! Super Sunday Brunch is offered every first and third Sunday of the month.

GIVE PARENTS A BREAK

The next “Give Parents a Break” date is April 5. Give Parents a Break provides eligible parents a few hours break from the stresses of parenting. The Air Force Aid Society provides funding, to make it possible.

To take advantage of this program, families must be referred by squadron commander or first sergeant, chaplain, doctor or medical professional, family advocacy personnel, family support center personnel or child development center personnel. Referred parents must make reservations the Wednesday prior. For details call the child development center at 747-3042.

FAST EDDIE’S 2 AT FITNESS CENTER

Check out Fast Eddie’s 2 located next to base pool. They serve smoothies, bagels and breakfast drinks from 6:00-9:00 a.m. Monday through Friday. For details call 747-6201

Community



Home away from home

Left: Patti Schmidt, center, was named the base Family Daycare Provider of the Year. Pictured with her are the children she watches Pierson Painter, front left; Preston Painter, back left; Jensen Schmidt, left center; Rena Jensen, center; Ajanee Jones, right center; and Austin Schmidt, right.

Right: Patti Schmidt receives flowers and a certificate from Kelly Painter, left and Connie Page, Family Childcare Center.



Photos by Senior Airman Monte Volk

Heir Force

Elizabeth Raeanne Leslie, 6-pound, 15-ounce, 19 inch baby girl born on Feb. 12 to Kari and Technical Sgt. Dan Leslie, 319th Maintenance Squadron.

Emily Vanessa Cloutier, 7-pound, 1.5-ounce, 21-inch baby girl born Feb. 22 to Master Sgt. Donald P. Cloutier, 319th Communications Squadron and Staff Sgt. Janel C. Cloutier, 319th Security Forces Squadron.

Hayden Vance Vernon, 8-pound, 3.6-ounce, 21-inch baby boy born Feb. 28 to Jo-Ann and Staff Sgt. Kelly Vernon, 319th Medical Group.

Joshua Stephen Harrington, 6-pound, 19.5-inch baby boy born Mar. 2 to Melody and Senior Airman Samuel Harrington, 319th Civil Engineer Squadron.

MUSH!

Sixth Graders compete in 9th Annual Twining Iditarod

By Shelly Troff
Public affairs

The Twining Middle School sixth-grade students participated in the 9th Annual Twining Iditarod March 14, a student sled-dog race specifically designed to replicate the famous Alaskan Iditarod.

Riding wooden sleds fashioned like those used by competitive mushers on the Iditarod Trail, seven racing teams designated "Teams A-F" competed in the race, using teamwork, cooperation and sheer "kidpower" to navigate a two-mile round trip race trail running from Twining Middle School to Carl Ben Eielson and back.

Mimicking the authentic Iditarod race, each team had a "musher," "leader," "a swing dog," "a wheel dog"

and teammates who served as race "sled dogs" to pull their team's sled to victory. Individual check stations were named identically to those found on the Alaskan course, and race rules required mandatory stops at each check station, manned by parent volunteers or "checkers," where the mushers signed in and out before returning to the trail.

At each check station, teams simulated feeding, watering and resting their dogs along with other race-essential-tasks. Violation cards were issued to teams who skipped or missed checkpoints or for individual team member who displayed poor sportsmanship at any time during that race segment.

"You're only as fast as your slowest member," said Barb Watson, a sixth



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott Davis

Twining Team "A" works hard for victory during the 9th Annual Twining Iditarod.

grade teacher at Twining, emphasizing to students the importance of coupling race survival skills with character education. The race is not just a physical test of dog-sled racing, but also an individual showcase of endurance, teamwork, and cooperation.

"This Survival Unit dove tales beautifully with character education," said Watson. "Like in real life, it's not just an individual effort...it's watching them

pull together as a team. Pulling together leads to good life skills."

First place Teams A and F were awarded the honor based on overall trail and checkpoint performance observed by race officials. A last place finish earned the symbolic "Red Lantern" award, an honor created to promote sportsmanship and emphasize no team be forgotten, regardless of their finish time.

Twining students studied Iditarod history during their Survival unit on Artic skills. "Iditarod" has three differing Native American definitions, but the consensus definition is "distant" or "distant place."

The first Iditarod race began on March 3, 1973 in Anchorage, testing the elements of human endurance and animal expertise in an effort to race sled dogs on treacherous snowy trails to the finish line in Nome.

Dick Wilman, the first Iditarod winner, finished that race in three weeks. Today's mushers complete the Trail in about 10 days. Total race mileage varies each year, but always exceeds 1,000 miles. Iditarod officials designate total mileage for the sled dog race at 1,049 miles: 1,000 miles for the compulsory race mileage and 49 miles symbolically added to signify Alaska as our 49th state.

In Alaska, dog teams are used daily for transportation and work, particularly in Native villages. Mushers and their teams served an integral function in Alaska during World War II, mostly to help the famous Eskimo Scouts patrol the vast wilderness in Western Alaska.



Twining Team "B", Colleen Concannon, Savannah Davis, Katherine Davis, Emily Bush and Jake Cline, began the two-mile race trail at Twining Elementary and Middle School.